



Alumna Subject Graduated Bridie Stevens
BA Management and Spanish
2008
Place of Work Bluefin Solutions
Position SAP BI Consultant



Through technology and industry expertise, Bluefin Solutions identifies business and technology trends and develops relevant and creative solutions to help clients throughout the world. SAP [Systems, Applications & Products in Data Processing] is premium enterprise application software.

As a SAP Business Information Consultant, Bridie works with clients to support their technology needs, from gathering business requirements to optimising the software.

Great minds *go on to* great places

What particularly attracted you to study at Royal Holloway?

At the start, there were two main motivators that attracted me to Royal Holloway. Firstly, the campus size and atmosphere; it was really easy to be involved with sports, dancing, charity fashion shows and everything that makes a university experience more than just academic. I was involved with running societies, choreographing, teaching and producing shows throughout my time at Royal Holloway. These experiences not only give you a balanced lifestyle that helps you stay active and engaged throughout your studies; they also demonstrate to employers that you are more than just a good student.

Secondly, the flexibility of studying a joint honours degree was really important to me, as I wanted to strike the correct balance between studying abroad and reaching fluency in Spanish, whilst still maintaining scope for choice within my Management studies. Many universities simply did not offer Management with Spanish as an option, and yet Royal Holloway allowed me to study courses as disparate as Financial Accounting and Golden Age Spanish literature.

Did you research the course before you applied?

Yes, I was really excited about the Spanish literature courses as it was something I'd been passionate

about for a long time. On the Management side I was a little less clued-up when I first applied, but my sister helped me understand a little more about what I could expect. I definitely think I made the right decision with the course I took.

How did you find the student experience?

I loved every minute! I was lucky to find a good holiday job which meant that during term time I was largely free to study and enjoy life at Holloway. I financed myself through my work as a Project Manager every Summer, Easter and Christmas. Consequently, during term time I really got involved with everything; I'm sure I spent an above average amount of time in Medicine [Student Bar] too!

Were you part of any societies or clubs?

I was on the committee for the Dance Society and taught Dance throughout my three years at Royal Holloway. I was also on the netball team, which I would recommend to anyone. The team atmosphere was fantastic and keeping busy outside of your studies really helps to maintain a balanced lifestyle.

What did you do on your PRA [Period of Residence Abroad]?

I spent the third year of my degree in Cadiz, Spain, where I studied Economics and Management. During that year I did everything I could to immerse

myself in the culture and meet people. I took dance classes in a local dance school and started surfing to meet the locals. I still frequently go back to Cadiz and other parts of Spain to visit all my friends; it was such an amazing year and I am so happy to say that it will always be part of my life.

What was the best part of your course?

I really enjoyed a couple of modules I took over the years in Spanish literature. The tutor, Dr Pym, had a way of teaching that made you feel that you were uncovering these old texts for the first time. He helped me to look at literature from my own point of view even when a book is as widely critiqued as Don Quixote. Not only did this make the courses he ran really enjoyable but also it has helped me to really understand what I read and to analyse things succinctly in order to make informed decisions while researching at work or in my personal life.

What is your outstanding memory of your time at Royal Holloway?

There are far too many to choose from! Pimms in the quad, netball season finals, the Summer Ball, playing tennis at Kingswood, frantically cramming before oral exams in Cafe Jules, the annual fashion show, netball initiation, first discovering the Founders Library, commandeering the jukebox at the Stumble Inn on a Sunday afternoon... the list goes on!





people with passion

“I have a lot of responsibility in my role which I found really empowers me to develop fast as an individual.”



How did you come to work at Bluefin Solutions?

After graduating I started working as a Project Manager in the web and software localisation industry. I decided to move on and started work as a Commercial Executive for Bluefin. After a year I realised that what I really enjoyed was the technical work and wanted increased involvement with more substantial projects. Bluefin Solutions runs an annual Graduate Scheme so I manage to qualify through the competency tests and interviews to join the Consulting team and have been promoted up the company since. Bluefin have a great ethos of taking on graduates that show potential but might not have taken the most direct route into IT. They look for astute graduates with business acumen or other soft-skills, the rest you can learn.

Tell us about your current role.

As a Business Intelligence Consultant my work is extremely varied and is largely dependent on the project I am managing or the client I am working with. I usually spend a few months on a single project working on everything from gathering the business requirements, designing and building the technical solution, testing and running training sessions for the end-users.

What are the best parts of your job?

The best thing about being an IT Consultant is that you never get bored: the nature of the job means that you are continually learning and developing. I have a lot of responsibility in my role which I found really empowers me to develop fast as an individual. Seeing the full project lifecycle is also particularly rewarding as you can see a concept grow into a working solution for high-profile Multinational Corporations.

What is the most important thing you learnt at Royal Holloway that you can apply to your professional or personal life?

The most important skill I learnt at Royal Holloway is the ability to teach myself. My degree typically had very few contact hours and so self-study and research were skills I developed early on. In my industry it is vital to be able to troubleshoot, research and find creative and new solutions. I have recently completed a project which analyses spend using SAP's new Spend Performance Management tool; there have been very few implementations of this globally so I was working largely in unknown territory with little documentation. Research and troubleshooting are highly transferable skills that certainly give me an advantage as a Consultant.

What do you hope to be doing in 5 years?

I don't have a particular plan at the moment, but there are so many opportunities within SAP and consulting in general. Technology largely dictates the shape of IT Consultancy so it is difficult to really look too far ahead as the technology used in BW is rapidly transforming. I am currently training to become a Supply Chain SME and I love the tangibility of Manufacturing in industry so I can definitely see myself staying in this line of work. I would certainly expect to head down a less technical route as my industry knowledge increases.

What does it mean to you to be an alumna of the College?

Creating a network to support the current students is really important, and events such as guest lectures can help add great insight for current students into life after Royal Holloway. With the current economic climate I think it is increasingly important to help Royal Holloway graduates find their feet and ease their transition into the working world. I'd like to assist in raising awareness as to which companies are recruiting and what careers are out there to ensure that Royal Holloway maintains its high rate of students that find employment. Personally, I'm proud to have attended Royal Holloway and hope that future students will have the same opportunities I have found despite the economic downturn.

For more Alumni Profiles visit: www.rhul.ac.uk/alumni/profiles/

